

sphere, although there are scattered lots of African material in other American institutions. Up to the present, our scientists have had to borrow African insect specimens for research from museums and universities of South Africa or European countries such as England, Belgium, France, Germany—countries with African colonies.

#### APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

NOTICE is hereby given to all Corporate Members that the Council at its November meeting approved the application of Mr. Pal Clark for REGULAR MEMBERSHIP, and that of Robert Roeter for STUDENT MEMBERSHIP in the California Academy of Sciences. If no objection to the election of these applicants be received at the office of the Academy within two weeks after November 17, they will be considered elected.

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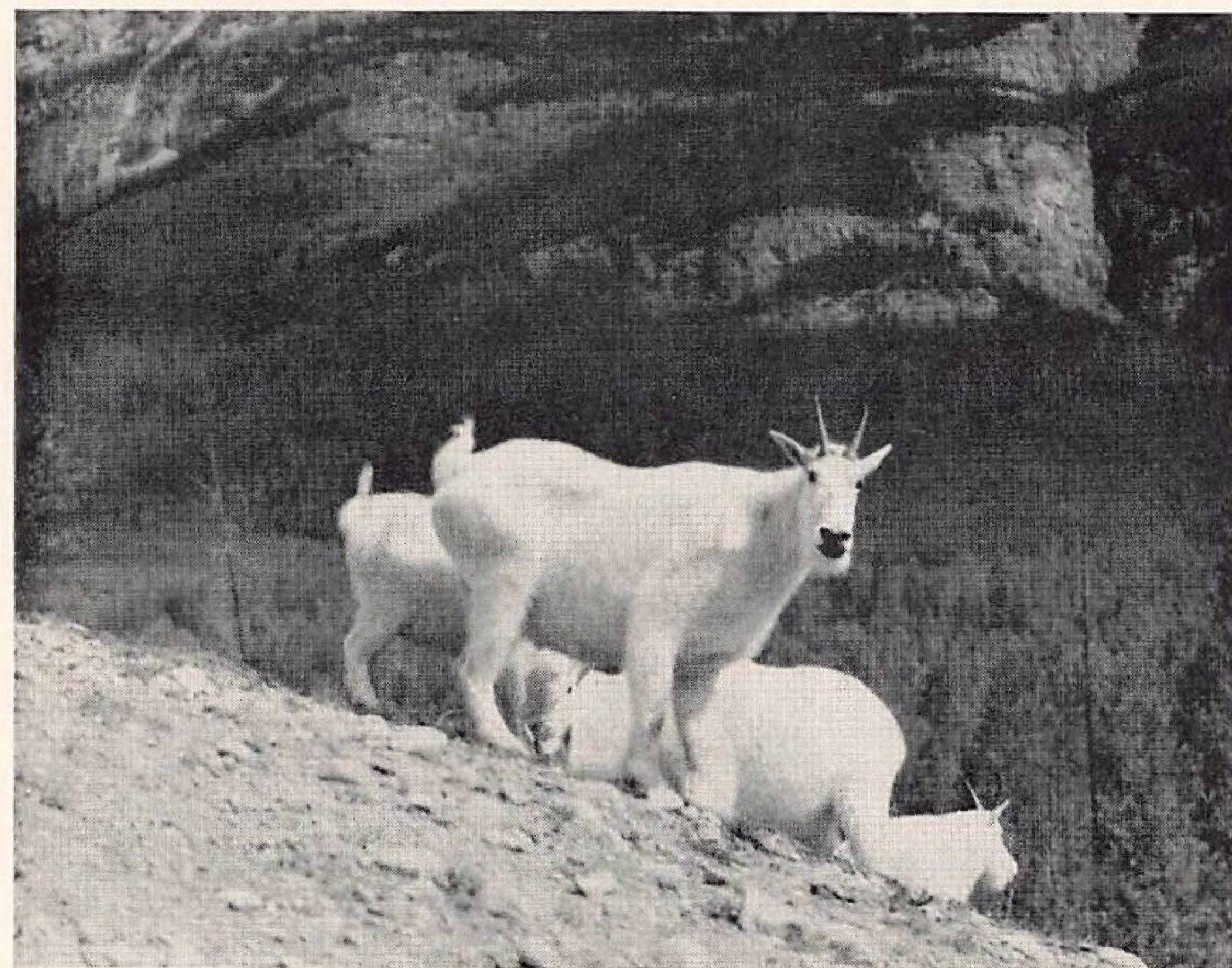
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# ACADEMY NEWS LETTER

Number 119

November, 1949



Photograph by Bert Harwell, courtesy National Audubon Society

#### ROCKY MOUNTAIN GOAT—

(*Oreamnos americanus*). Ranging from Alaska to Montana and Idaho, this snow white mountaineer of the family Bovidae is more of a rock antelope than a goat, being related to the chamois of European peaks.

(See page 2)

Published Monthly by

CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

GOLDEN GATE PARK • SAN FRANCISCO

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## November Announcement

THE REGULAR NOVEMBER MEETING of the California Academy of Sciences will be held in North American Hall, West Wing of the Academy buildings in Golden Gate Park, on Wednesday evening, November 23, 1949, at 8 o'clock. Opening the fall series of lectures on the Walter B. Scaife Foundation, Mr. Bert Harwell will give an illustrated talk entitled

### CANADA WEST

"Western Canada" is prosaic as a geography text; transpose, and you get a ringing invitation to wild new lands, seen through the motion picture camera in full color, and you go with Bert Harwell. To all who have walked a nature trail with the former Park Naturalist of Yosemite, or have heard him by a Glacier Point campfire, or have seen his pictures and listened to his uncanny whistling of bird calls on the Audubon Screen Tours, Bert Harwell is a favorite guide to the out-of-doors.

The country called "Canada West" is some of the most out-of-doors upon our continent. From the Straits of Juan de Fuca to the Canadian Rockies is a big, rugged land where civilization clings here and there to the edges. Strange oceanic birds nest on the rocky islands in the straits; mountain goats and sheep still elude hunters upon the Rocky Mountain peaks. In between are great forests, plunging rivers, clear, deep lakes, lovely valleys—wilderness yet, with its beaver, moose, elk, bison, and—at the other end of the scale—mountain bluebirds, rufous hummingbirds, and many other species of the northern country. There is room here, too, for that fringe of civilization: old-world Victoria, thriving Vancouver, and the famous resorts of Lake Louise and Banff and Jasper National Park.

If you've already seen western Canada, here's a chance to relive the experience; if you haven't, "Canada West" will make you want to pack your bags and head north.

The public is cordially invited to "go" there with Bert Harwell.

### SCAIFE LECTURES FOR 1949-1950

THE COMPLETE SCHEDULE of lectures on the Walter B. Scaife Foundation, under the auspices of the California Academy of Sciences in coöperation with the Audubon Screen Tours of the National Audubon Society:

November 23, 1949—CANADA WEST—Bert Harwell.

January 6, 1950—SOUNDS OF THE SAGELAND—Alice and Harold Allen.

February 10, 1950—PAUL BUNYAN COUNTRY—Walter J. Breckenridge.

March 15, 1950—ANIMALS UNAWARE—Howard Cleaves.

April 28, 1950—FROM COAST TO CREST—Alexander Sprunt, Jr.

### GOETHE AND *Goethea*

QUITE APPROPRIATELY in this bicentennial year of the birth of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, the Academy Herbarium has received its first specimen of *Goethea*, a small Brazilian shrub of the mallow family. The plant was named in 1821 by two German scientists.

The remarkable feature of *Goethea* is that its flowers come out along the stems, not in clusters or in the leaf-axils. Although the individual flowers are not conspicuous, they are surrounded by large, highly colored bracts or modified leaves. This combination of flowers and large, showy leaves is seen also in the poinsettia, although the latter belongs to a different family of plants.

The bicentennial and *Goethea* are both timely reminders of the frequently overlooked fact that, beyond poetry and literature, Goethe was a remarkably fine man of science. He was a recognized botanist and famed as a scientist in his own time. He performed a great variety of experiments and recorded many observations on plants, animals, minerals, light, and colors.

"Many of Goethe's observations were remarkably correct and some of the conclusions he drew have had a marked influence on science persisting down to the present time," writes Charles Engard in the *Scientific Monthly*.

The special gift of *Goethea* came to the Academy from the Botanical Garden in Rio de Janeiro, an adjunct of the National Museum of Brazil.

### ALGIERS TO CAPE TOWN

THE ACADEMY'S one-man African expedition has reached its final stages. Entomology Research Associate Borys Malkin has recently reported from Cape Town, Union of South Africa, which he has reached after a year of collecting his way across the western Sahara and down the little traveled West Coast, notorious as the "white man's grave." Borys is very much alive, however, and will soon return to our own West Coast, via London. Some 100,000 insects having preceded him, he is expected at the Academy some time in January.

Malkin left Algiers on the Mediterranean in November 1948, crossing the Sahara via French motor transport to the Niger, then hitched his way to Lagos on the Gulf of Guinea. He worked up and down the Gold Coast, far into Nigeria, thence down to the Cameroons, both British and French. An unscheduled side trip took him to the little-known and rarely visited Portuguese island of São Tomé. He climbed 13,000-foot Mt. Cameroon, a live volcano which rises abruptly from the sea, on the mainland across a 30-mile strait from its 9,000-foot companion volcano on Fernando Po. (These are places and features of the earth the average American has never heard of.) Then came French Equatorial Africa, Belgian Congo, Angola, and finally the Union.

This journey is all the more remarkable in that, not only was Borys entirely alone, but he was completely dependent upon local transport and supplies. With these facts in mind, his enormous collection of material largely new to the Academy—much of it new to science—is a satisfying return on a relatively small investment of funds. According to Dr. E. S. Ross, Curator of Insects, the Academy's collection of African material will be the only extensive one of its kind in the Western Hemis-